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II. DEPARTMENT OF PHILANTHROPY, CHARITIES AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

The System of Charities in Washington, D. C.¹—While the general principles of social service seem to be the same in every well-organized association, it is interesting to observe their application to the specific conditions which vary so greatly in different places.

In Washington, for example, of the 3,000 families treated in the course of the year by the Associated Charities, nearly two-thirds are colored, and the recognized lack of principle, of morality, of responsibility, among the colored people, makes the problem of their improvement a harder one than that raised by the simple question of poverty. Washington has no compulsory education law, and has consequently many men and women, grown boys and girls, who can neither read nor write. We can realize what it would mean in our work to have no power beyond our own persuasions to force a refractory boy or girl to attend school. In visiting some of the open-air playgrounds of Washington during school hours, one sees a large number of children of school age, especially boys, who seem to prefer a day of exercise (or idleness) at the playground to the same time spent in gaining an education. Being asked why they do not go to school, they give a full and sufficient reason by saying "Don't want to." I think if the agents of the Associated Charities were asked what one municipal reform would most help them in their work, they would say with one voice, "Give us a compulsory education law and a truant officer."

The oldest section of Washington, and the poorest, is Georgetown, the original site of many old mansions famous in history. The ground is very low, intersected by a canal which is practically an open sewer. The former mansions have fallen to decay, but still serve as tenement homes, where each large family rents one large tumbledown room, and swarms of children, black and white, crowd the halls and stairways. There are many shanties and lean-tos in this section, no better than large packing-boxes thrown on the damp earth, no running water, and no plumbing of any kind. Little wonder that one hears at almost every door, "Johnnie's down with typhoid now," or "Mary has the fever," or "Don't come in, lady; all the children have diphtheria." Here is a section almost entirely without employment for man or woman. There are no manufacturing interests, few stores, very little laboring work, no piers or docks. Most of the families are supported by the women, whose sole form of employment seems to be the mending of canvas sacks,—meal-bags. These sacks are riddled with holes by mice, and are constantly in need of mending. The women may be seen in the streets early in the morning, dragging large bundles of them to their homes, where they spend the rest of the day patching and darning. One poor woman told us quite cheerfully that she counts all the holes, and that

¹Abstract of address by Helene Ingram, New York, before the staff of the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor.

she never found more than twenty-five in one bag. The pay is one cent for each bag.

These are some of the conditions in the worst section of Washington, where I spent a long afternoon, making some twenty or twenty-five calls with a volunteer worker. The volunteers in Washington, by the way, are a most excellent argument for friendly visiting. A conference class for the training of these unpaid workers is held twice a month at the central office, under Mr. Weller, the general secretary, and after a preliminary training there the volunteers are drafted off to the agencies, where each is placed in charge of one or two carefully selected families.

The paid agents or visitors have almost entire control and responsibility in their own districts, being under no supervision except that of the general secretary, to whom they report occasionally, though not at any stated times, and whom they consult when any question especially puzzling arises. The offices are planned somewhat like those of the New York Charity Organization Society, each office being located in its own district, and consisting of one, two or more rooms, sometimes of a whole small house. There are six division offices. The agent opens her office at nine o'clock, receives and interviews applicants from nine until eleven (sometimes as many as forty being interviewed in one morning), and spends the rest of the day in making visits.

The Associated Charities gives no relief from its own funds, but has the coöperation of the Citizens' Relief Association, which is "all funds," having no paid agents, no office or administrative expenses. All its disbursements are made through the agents of the Associated Charities, and cover food, fuel and shoes. But the agent's work is not all upon her cases. Her office is called a social center, and here are held, on several evenings of the week, classes and meetings, some for contributors, some for mothers, some for boys, for girls, etc. The agent gives addresses before these meetings, and arranges for other speakers also to address them. She takes full charge of the stamp savings, similar to New York's Penny Provident Fund, devoting one afternoon each week to stamp visits; and one agent, last winter, started at her office a sewing-room for poor women. The agents write all the letters regarding their own cases, reports, inquiries and information, and very often write the records themselves. One visiting stenographer from the central office reaches each district office about once a week, and takes a few hours' dictation, later typewriting the records so dictated. Each agent also has a number of friendly visitors reporting to her, in some cases as many as sixty for one district.

At each division office we find, besides the agent of the Associated Charities, a nurse from the Instructive Visiting Nurse Society, together with her closet of medicines, bandages and special bed-clothing for the sick poor. The nurse receives applicants during certain hours, when the office becomes a little dispensary, and she is always ready to visit the cases of illness recommended by the agent.

A pleasant feature of the South is the cordial hospitality with which one meets on every hand. The little children on the street smile at the passing

stranger and say "How do?" and the visitor to the poorest home receives a warm welcome and an invitation to come again soon.

Charities Building in Baltimore.—A Federated Charities building has recently been completed in Baltimore. The headquarters were purchased by the Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor from a legacy left by the late J. Craft Whittington, and this association, in pursuance of a plan for coöperative work that was inaugurated some time ago, invited the Charity Organization Society and the Children's Aid Society to share the building. At the opening ceremonies, it was stated that private charity in Baltimore is so comprehensive that official charity is not needed.

Associated Charities of Salem, Massachusetts.—The Associated Charities of Salem, Massachusetts, have completed twelve years' labor to unite the charitable activities of the city. All of the local societies and many individuals make use of the bureau of registration, while the Samaritan, St. Vincent de Paul, city relief committees and the municipal poor department are in close touch.

Public Baths.—The New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor found that of 125,000 persons who used the public baths, only 16,052 were females. The association thinks it has found a remedy by an appeal to their vanity. Cards are now issued with the inscription, "For a soft, rosy complexion, a quick, graceful walk, a healthy appetite, try a shower-bath twice a week."

Boys' and Girls' Aid Society of Oregon.—The eighteenth annual report of the Boys' and Girls' Aid Society of Oregon describes some interesting work in that State. The society's activity is limited to the care of homeless, neglected or abused children under sixteen, who are sound mentally and physically. It also receives and cares for "youths under the age of sixteen, who have made their first missteps and are in danger of being imprisoned." What the society calls the "incurrigible class" is kept at the receiving home for "a season," and then paroled under supervision. "Thus we assume to a great extent the work done in the East by juvenile courts, as our methods are nearly identical, with the exception that instead of a report being made to the judges, the delinquent children report to our superintendent, who should have learned by experience to deal with this class much better than the average jurist." We incline to doubt the statement and conclusion, and it seems unfortunate that such an emaciated version of the possibilities of juvenile court work should be presented to the public of Oregon.

The dependent children are placed out in family homes, and visited "at least once a year." Out of 337 children visited, there were only three whom the superintendent found it necessary to remove. Such a remarkable record speaks well for the character of the Oregon families, and excites the envy of child-placing agencies in the East, which visit the children more frequently, and find it desirable—if not absolutely necessary—to transfer many of the children from one family to another.

The legislature appropriates \$8,000 for the use of the society during the next two years. The receipts for the year were \$8,371.18, of which \$4,499.25

was paid by the state and counties, \$3,254.36 was interest and rents collected, and only \$617.57 was contributed by voluntary subscription.

There is no state board of charities in Oregon, and the supervision of this subsidized organization is left to the benevolent citizens who constitute its board of directors. That this plan has so far worked well is attested by the remarkable confidence which the society enjoys, and is due to the calibre of its officers and the fact that its superintendent is a man of high character and ability.

Seattle Charity Organization Society.—The Charity Organization Society of Seattle, Washington, has just completed its seventh year. For some years its very existence was precarious, but the period of storm and stress seems to have been happily passed, and its recent report is evidence that it has now found itself, and is strong in the confidence of the community. Under the direction of its secretary, Mr. H. Wirt Steele, formerly of Chicago, the society is branching out into the progressive field of preventive and correctional work. Machinery has been set in motion for the establishment of a juvenile court, and a Charities Indorsement Committee established, to suppress superfluous charities, and give expert advice to legitimate charities for the purpose of increasing their efficiency. This committee is composed of representatives elected by the Chamber of Commerce, Merchants' Association, Manufacturers' Association, also charity societies, and has secured the cordial coöperation of the contributing public. The society publishes a monthly organ, known as the *Exponent*, which serves to voice its needs and to educate public sentiment.

Indianapolis Charity Organization Society.—A very interesting report has just been published by the Charity Organization Society of Indianapolis. It is printed in an attractive form and is full of valuable material.

It demonstrates the possibility of controlling mendicancy and pauperism by proper organization and efficient, intelligent work. The society is directed by men of common sense and civic patriotism, able to bring into harmonious coöperation all public and private agencies for the relief of poverty and correction of crime. To build up such an organization and win for it the absolute confidence and coöperation of the public is the work of years.

The work of the society covers an extensive field, but the responses to appeals for money have been most generous. The number of applicants for the year was 1,299. Of this number, 775 were new, and 524 were old; 1,008 were white, and 291 colored.

The society has had for many years efficient coöperation with the township trustees, the city dispensary and the city hospital. The report also states that the work has received the cordial support of the police force and the police judge.

Two years ago the society began a systematic investigation of the needs of the blind and crippled beggars. It was understood that the vicious and immoral should be turned over to the police, but that those who were willing to work should be encouraged to do so. This work continued until the chronic mendicants were driven out of the streets. Many are still living in

the city, but go to the small towns to beg. Only one man during two years showed a willingness to learn a trade. He was blind, and was sent by the society to the blind industrial school, and stayed two weeks, costing the society five dollars. The coöperation of the police in this work has been most valuable, in fact the society is constantly gaining the interest and active, permanent coöperation of associations, individuals and churches.

The committee on friendly visiting has laid the foundation for an aggressive campaign along that line for the coming year.

During the coal famine, the demand was met by citizens, mine owners and the railroads, who placed the responsibility for the distribution of coal upon the society. Noble assistance was given by the *Press*, which sent a representative to the mines, at its own expense, to hasten the shipment. The city furnished four teams for delivering. Able-bodied men, out of work, were employed to handle and deliver the coal. Attention is called to the fact that many boys and girls get their first lessons in stealing by picking coal.

One of the most interesting features of the work is child-saving. The society had been working untiringly to form an organization whose duty it should be to save helpless children from vicious, immoral and cruel parents. A law was passed by the legislature creating a committee called the Board of Children's Guardians; the activity of this board has touched nearly every form of work for children. The board is especially responsible for the passage of the truancy law and the juvenile court law. The tenement house question is under consideration, and first steps were taken last year to improve conditions.

The report speaks very highly of the work done by the Indiana avenue and the Harley Gibbs settlements, and also gives an interesting account of the negro organization for assisting the poor of that race. This work has profited by the suggestions made and the interest shown by the C. O. S.

The past season has been one of unusual activity in summer charities. The Vacant Lots Cultivation and the Fresh Air Mission publish separate reports. The *News'* vacation work has taken a definite form and become an excellent part of the general charity work. The *News* has also furnished free ice to the sick and pasteurized milk to babies. The Indianapolis *Star* made a special effort in behalf of the Fresh Air Mission and raised a considerable part of the funds to run the work. All the papers have assisted greatly during the year. They have never failed to make public appeals for special needs as well as for the general development of benevolent work.

The society is making a specialty of training workers for various fields in charitable and social activities and is also putting forth its first effort toward the prevention and relief of tuberculosis and the study of sanitary conditions. A convalescent home has been planned in one of the healthiest locations in the State, where people with moderate means may, for a small sum, take treatment and rest. In addition to this trained workers are being placed in the field, and by their influence and suggestions will save much unnecessary sickness.

Child Labor in New Jersey.—In Governor Murphy's message to the New Jersey legislature in January, 1903, attention was called to various complaints that children of less than the legal age were employed in factories, notably the glass factories of South Jersey. The governor stated that he had investigated these complaints and was satisfied that they were much exaggerated, but recommended that he be given the power to remove the factory inspector for cause at any time, and that the minimum age limit for the employment of boys be raised to fourteen, to correspond with that for girls. His recommendations were adopted by the legislature, with the proviso that the new laws should not go into effect until September 1. It was confidently expected that John C. Ward, the chief inspector, would be removed promptly on this date, but the governor apparently felt that it was unwise to take cognizance of that officer's past neglect of duty, especially in view of the fact that the department of factory inspection was notoriously undermanned, and that the inspector might set this up as an excuse. The governor met the dilemma by putting his secretary, John L. Swayze, in charge of the work of the department. Mr. Ward continued to draw his salary up to the end of the year and then resigned. Mr. Swayze has full control. Already he has proved that so far from the reports of the disobedience of the law being "exaggerated," the actual conditions were actually understated. Some of the material which Mr. Swayze has to work with in his department is not of a high standard, but he has put some backbone into all of his deputies, and has taken hold of his difficult task with great vigor and efficiency.

The New Jersey branch of the Consumers' League invited a number of representatives of educational and philanthropic organizations to meet in Newark on December 5, to discuss present conditions and the needs for further legislation, with a view to forming a permanent child-labor committee. The meeting was presided over by Mr. Hugh F. Fox, who was the chairman of the child-labor committee of the National Conference of Charities which met in Atlanta last spring. Mr. Fox made a plea for the practical coöperation of all the forces which are dealing with children,—the truant officer, probation officer, child-caring societies, associated charities, relief agencies and labor leaders. He declared that at present the factory inspector is overwhelmed with work. "Complaints of child-labor abuses are piling in on him faster than he can handle them; his deputies are discharging children by the score; he has suits enough now on hand to strain his energies for months; and in the midst of all this hurly-burly he must keep his head level and act with cool judgment, lest the law be made so obnoxious that it defeat its own ends! In this transition period of new experience, it is almost impossible to tell precisely what are the exact limitations of the law, or the imperfections of the present system. That some further legislation will eventually be needed, there is little doubt; but the people who are administering the work are best able to decide what it should be, and just when it is expedient to initiate it." In the general discussion which followed, the importance of a working agreement between the factory inspectors and truant officers was emphasized. Mrs. E. E. Williamson declared that the

truant officers could enter the factories without further legislation. The meeting concluded not to advocate any immediate action, but it was felt that the time had come to federate all the forces which are working for the welfare of the child and the preservation of family life. The chairman was empowered to appoint a representative committee, pledged to the support of the departments of factory inspection, public education, juvenile courts, and the State Board of Children's Guardians, in the administration of the laws to benefit children. The committee was instructed to coöperate with these forces and others in securing further facilities for increased efficiency of service.

As soon as the legislature meets, arrangements will no doubt be made to increase the appropriation for the factory inspector's department, so that it may be enabled to perform its duties completely.

Establishment of a New Jersey State Board of Charities.—The annual report of the New Jersey State Charities Aid Association has been delivered by Charlton T. Lewis, LL. D., president of the association, to Governor Murphy. Its leading feature is the account given by the general secretary, Frederick H. Wines, LL. D., of the powers, duties and operations of state boards of charities and boards of control in all the states which have, or have had, them. The association will concentrate its efforts at Trenton, this winter, on the establishment of a New Jersey State Board of Charities. Dr. Wines was secretary of the Illinois board from 1869 to 1893, and from 1897 to 1899, when he was appointed assistant director of the United States Census. He has been identified with the movement of which he writes, almost from its beginning, and is qualified to speak on the subject as an expert.

A board of control is an executive board; local boards of trustees are boards of control. A supervisory board, on the other hand, has no executive powers; or if it has any, they relate to individuals, not to the management of institutions. Supervisory boards serve without compensation; the members of state boards of control are usually paid salaries, and are expected to give their entire time to the duties of their office.

There are or have been, in the United States, twenty-eight state boards, of which only eight are central boards of control. An account of each of these twenty-eight boards is given, and an abstract of the laws under which they operate, together with a brief notice of what they have respectively accomplished. So complete a task has never before been attempted, and the collecting of so much interesting and valuable matter in a single state document is a service rendered by this association to the entire country and to the world, which should be appreciated as it deserves. Doubtless the report will be in demand by students everywhere, and it will exert a wide and healthy influence upon the general course of American legislation.

This historical and legal account of the powers and duties of state boards is followed by a well-written and highly readable review of the movement from its start to date. The almshouse is the first eleemosynary institution to be created in any community. The accumulation in it of a mixed population of sufferers suggests the need for classification of paupers. The first

institutions to be provided for special classes, such as pauper children and the pauper insane, are furnished by private benevolence. Then subsidies are asked and granted from the public treasury. Finally, the state itself undertakes to meet this demand, and public charity is born.

The state is sovereign, and what is done in this direction by counties and municipalities, is done by its authority. A moral obligation, therefore, rests upon the state, to see that the functions delegated by it are properly exercised. Hence the need of supervision, which the state boards have been organized to supply.

The question whether advisory or executive state boards are most influential and effective for good, has been repeatedly discussed by the National Conference of Charities at its annual sessions, and the weight of opinion in that body is in favor of boards with powers of visitation, inspection, report and recommendation, leaving the control and management of the state institutions in the hands of individual boards of trust.

The arguments in favor of state boards of control, as presented by their advocates, are fairly and fully stated in the report of the association. Nevertheless, after giving them full consideration, Dr. Wines does not regard them as convincing.

It is pointed out that the Kansas and Wisconsin boards of control have acknowledged and complained of political interference with the appointments made by them to such an extent that it is characterized as "an intolerable evil." The Iowa board is now composed of exceptionally able and upright men, and it is not yet clear what will occur in that state, but the extraordinary provisions in the statutes show that the fear of erecting a gigantic and all-powerful political machine was present to the minds of those by whom it was formed.

Attention is called to the testimony of Mr. James E. Heg, ex-superintendent of the New Jersey Reformatory, founded on his personal and very varied experience both there and in Wisconsin, to the effect that the Wisconsin system destroys the initiative of superintendents, reduces them to the position of figureheads, discourages their ambitions and impairs their usefulness to the state.

A state board of control does not exercise the moral or educational influence that resides in supervisory boards.

Such a board itself needs supervision, which that system does not provide for. With local boards of management and a central supervisory board, the state secures the advantages of both systems; it loses nothing, it gains much. A printed list of the powers conferred upon boards of charities in the various states shows that there is work enough for them to do without imposing on them executive duties, while the special functions which they fulfil cannot be discharged, equally well at least, by state boards of control. One common purpose underlies them all. It can be stated in a single word—publicity. No abuse, no wrong can flourish, except in the dark.

The American state boards of public charity have been the center of one of the most noteworthy movements in the evolution of modern civilization.

From them has gone forth an influence that has been felt at home and abroad, in Europe, and even in Asia. They have been behind three great reforms in this country: its child-saving work, the amelioration of the lot of the insane, and the recent modifications in the treatment of crime and criminals. What they could not do directly they have accomplished indirectly, by organizing state and national conferences of charities and county boards of voluntary auxiliary visitors.

New Jersey has shared in the benefits of this movement, but has not yet taken her proper place in it. Full credit is given the State for what it has achieved in the line of philanthropic advance. The State Board of Health and the State Charities Aid Association have performed some of the functions of a state board. But they have not adequate authority and power, and the association is cramped for funds. What it has accomplished in the face of adverse conditions is surprising; but it is not a board of charities, and that is what the state needs and what the association urges the legislature to create without further delay.

The New Jersey Training School for Feeble-Minded Girls and Boys.—The fifteenth annual report of this institution shows a vigorous growth and improvement in its work. The number of children sent by the State and the number of private and free pupils has increased.

Hon. Philip P. Baker, the president, lays special emphasis on the work in the different school departments. He also calls attention to the work of the board of lady visitors in providing the children with amusements which the latter can appreciate and enjoy.

The present organization of the work under the superintendency of Mr. E. R. Johnstone is especially thorough. The daily facts in connection with each child; its general physical condition, its cleanliness, its habits of sitting, standing or walking, and any possible symptoms of anaemia, the various preliminary tests of sight or hearing; its family history and environment before entering the institution, are all carefully recorded.

The report of the physician (Dr. Charles W. Wilson) shows a favorable condition of health in the institution. Dr. Wilson points out the peculiar value of manual training and gymnastics in that "they are essential in developing dormant faculties and form an important part in the work of 'education by doing.'" The defective child's entire body is stimulated and in that way the brain areas are reached.

Attempt to Elevate Retail Liquor Business in Ohio.—At the last annual meeting of the Ohio Brewers' Association, which was held two months ago, the president of the association declared, in his formal address, that it is the duty of the brewers to elevate the retail liquor business and to do all in their power to close disreputable places. He argued that a saloon could and should be conducted as decently as any other business, and that the power to bring saloons to this point lies with the brewers. He recommended that they refuse to sell beer to any place of a low order, and that the retailers be made to understand that if their places are not conducted in a respectable manner they cannot buy beer. The association proved to be

even more radical than its president, for it passed a resolution which went farther than his resolution. The resolution was as follows:

"Resolved, That, whereas the lawless and disreputable element in the saloon business exists to the detriment of all the legitimate interests of the members of the association; be it

"Resolved That it shall be the duty of the executive committee to investigate all cases of complaint involving the conduct of saloons selling beer in this State, and in case it shall be proved to the satisfaction of the committee that a saloon is conducted in a lawless and disreputable manner the member of this association supplying said saloon with beer shall be ordered to immediately discontinue business relations with its proprietor, and to withdraw his support, financial or otherwise, from him; and in case of failure on the part of said member to immediately obey such order of the committee, or in case the saloon shall be supplied or supported by a brewer who is not a member of this association, the committee shall without delay take such measures as may lie in its power, legal or otherwise, to enforce the closing up of such saloon."

It is remarkable that this startlingly novel action of the Ohio brewers has passed almost unnoticed in the press. To those who have any practical experience with the question, it is an event of the greatest significance and a happy augury for the future.